



HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

National Register of Historic Places: The City has 3 Districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Manitou Springs Primary Historic District, Crystal Valley Cemetery, and the Keithley Log Cabin District. The City also has 11 individually-listed properties in the National Register of Historic Places, including: the Barker House, Briarhurst, and Miramont Castle.

Local Historic District: The Manitou Springs Local Historic Districts were originally designated in 1980 and cover an area of nearly 456 acres, over half of the City's developed area. The District includes more than 750 contributing structures, representing a range of architectural styles from the late 19th through the early 20th century. This local historic district includes many of the same areas that are a part of the National Register District, but provides the City with tools to protect and preserve the character and integrity of historic buildings and neighborhoods, such as the Historic District Design Guidelines.

Historic Sub-districts: The Manitou Springs Local Historic Districts are divided into 16 sub-districts to better define and protect the unique aspects of diverse neighborhoods and areas within the larger district. The sub-districts are:

- Agate Hill
- Cemetery
- Cliff Dwellings
- Commercial Core
- El Colorado Lodge
- El Paso Cottages
- High Road
- Log Cabin
- Lower Washington
- Midland
- Minnehaha-Pilot Knob
- Peakview
- Ruxton
- Upper Washington
- Villas
- West Manitou

Grants and Programs: The City oversees a number of state and local programs which incentivize and encourage the rehabilitation of historic properties. These include:

- **Local Grants:** The City has awarded 8 grants of \$500 each to local property owners since 2014.
- **State Tax Credit:** The City oversees applications for the State's Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program for residential properties. To date, 11 tax credit projects have been completed.



TRENDS & KEY ISSUES

Historic Preservation Program

Manitou Springs has an active historic preservation program overseen by a Council-appointed Historic Preservation Commission. Alterations to existing buildings or new construction within the City's Local Historic District are informed by the City's Historic District Design Guidelines, last updated in 2009.

Threats from Natural Disasters

While the threat varies by risk, many of the historic structures in Manitou Springs are located in areas of high natural hazard risk. For example, much of the Commercial Core and West Manitou historic sub-districts are located within the Fountain Creek flood plain.

TRENDS & KEY ISSUES

Historic Bridges & Retaining Walls

Flooding poses a risk to the City’s 15 historic bridges and numerous retaining walls along Fountain and Ruxton Creeks. To maintain their historic designation, the bridges and walls must be maintained in accordance with the City’s historic standards. A 2009 study estimated that at least \$2.5 million in replacements or repairs were required to ensure the proper maintenance of these assets. A 2015 study identified additional needs following the floods in recent years. In 2016, bridge repairs and reconstruction are planned for the Canon Avenue and Park Avenue bridges. The Brook Street and Spring Street bridges have been severely damaged and will be replaced.

Historic & Cultural Organizations

Numerous local non-profit organizations work to support history, arts, and culture in the City. These include:

- Manitou Arts Center
- Manitou Springs Arts Council
- Commonwheel Artists Cooperative
- Manitou Springs Creative District Steering Committee
- Manitou Springs Heritage Center
- Miramont Castle
- Mineral Springs Foundation

- **State Historical Fund:** The State Historical Fund awards grants to projects across the State for restoration/rehabilitation, surveys and architectural assessments, and preservation planning studies, among other activities. Since 2000, Manitou Springs has received 18 grants from the Fund, totaling over \$1.4 million. Projects (and grants awarded) include:
 - Manitou Bath House & Spa (\$515,750 awarded)
 - Canon and Park Ave Bridges (\$292,273 awarded)
 - Manitou Springs Public Library (\$186,671 awarded)

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Prehistory: Prehistoric tribes camped in and around Manitou Springs for over 11,000 years. These cultures are divided into Paleoindians (7,800 to 11,500 Before Present); Archaic (1,850 to 7,800 BP); and Late Prehistoric (100 to 1450 AD).

Location of Cultural Resources: While the historic settlement of the City is well documented, the City’s prehistory is difficult to inventory due to the urban development that covers the majority of the City’s land area. However, given that humans have inhabited the area for thousands of years, the City is a high probability area for encountering cultural resources. As such, the City should practice due diligence when earth-moving projects are conducted in order to record and preserve exposed resources.

Significance to American Indians: The federal government recognizes 12 historic tribes that have Sacred and Traditional Cultural Properties surrounding Pikes Peak. Oral traditions list the City’s Mineral Springs as Sacred, and the area was considered to be a neutral one where different tribes could rest in peace.

ARTS & CULTURE

Creative District: The City has formed a Creative District and Board, and will continue to seek official support from the State’s Colorado Creative Industries. This designation will provide the Creative District with access to technical assistance, access to funding through the State’s Office of Economic Development and community loan fund, and mentoring from other creative districts in the State.

Artists and Galleries: The City is home to 14 galleries displaying art from local artists working in a variety of mediums, including painting, culinary arts, glass, pottery/ceramics, textiles and woodwork, among many others.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

City of Manitou Springs: As a Certified Local Government, Manitou Springs is required to enact and enforce a historic preservation program; establish a historic preservation commission; maintain a system for surveying and inventorying historic properties; provide opportunities for public participation in historic preservation efforts; and review and comment on nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. Local designation of districts and landmarks is different from listing on the National Register, as local designation allows the City to regulate construction, renovations, and additions to designated structures or to non-designated structures within a historic district. These regulations are administered by the Manitou Springs Planning Department.

Historic Preservation Commission: The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is a 7-member citizen board that is broadly tasked with protecting the City's historic resources. The HPC reviews applications for Material Change of Appearance Certifications (MCACs) and verifies that improvements to historic, contributing, and proposed infill structures in local historic districts are consistent with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior Standards and the City's Historic District Design Guidelines.

RELATED PLANS & STUDIES

- [*Manitou Springs Historic District Design Guidelines \(2009\) – City of Manitou Springs*](#)
- [*Historic Structures Assessment Report for City of Manitou Springs Historic Stone Bridges and Retaining Walls \(2009\) – City of Manitou Springs*](#)

SOURCES

- City of Manitou Springs
- National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service
- Manitou Springs Arts Council
- Mineral Springs Foundation